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## Book Reviews

**Pauline and Other Studies in Early Christian History.** By W. M. RAMSAY. New York: A. C. Armstrong & Son, 1906. Pp. 415. \$3.50.

This volume consists of fourteen essays all but one of which had been previously published—essays which the author believes possess “a certain unity of character as a survey of important movements and men in the early Christian centuries.”

The first essay, “Shall We Hear Evidence or Not?” deals with what the author regards as “the greatest event” in the life of Paul, viz., his experience on the road to Damascus. There is in it a considerable element of polemic, not without a touch of sarcasm, against those who think that Paul’s experience was some form of madness. Although the title suggests a calm, dispassionate, and judicial discussion, one cannot honestly say that it always maintains this character. Matters purely hypothetical are sometimes stated as though well-attested facts. Thus we are told that “Saul in his youth was mainly occupied with the thought of Hebrew progress in the past, and the coming triumph of Hebrew religion.” A little later on we read that Saul “must from childhood have been filled with the desire and hope of hearing for himself the Divine voice.”

Again, since the author confessedly speaks as “a historian and geographer,” one cannot fail to notice the dogmatic tone that marks some of his purely theological utterances. Thus he refers several times to that which was manifested to Paul near Damascus as the “Divine Nature.” Paul was then permitted to become “aware of the omnipresent God who is everywhere around us and in us.” The author does not shrink from saying that Paul saw God near Damascus (p. 71) and knew that Jesus was God (p. 72). It may very properly be doubted whether there is any marked difference between the tenableness of this language and that which ascribes Paul’s experience to madness, against which the author is justly moved to protest.

It of course was not accidental that in this discussion of the evidence for a superhuman event in Paul’s experience the most important passage in the apostle’s own words is not touched. The result of the omission of the Galatian passage and the Galatian point of view, according to which the essential part of the experience near Damascus was an inner revelation to Paul’s spirit, is to give altogether undue prominence to the external

circumstances of the event. With this lack of balance may be placed also the fault of ascribing to Paul what should plainly be ascribed to Jesus. Thus the author declares that Paul has not only moved the world and changed the whole course of history, but has also "made us what we are." This sounds more like a voice out of the beginning of the sixteenth century, when men spoke of the epistle to the Romans as the "purest gospel," than like the utterance of a contemporary in the twentieth century, when Christ rather than Paul is recognized as the founder of Christianity.

The chapter on "The Statesmanship of Paul" treats the subject as "an episode in Roman history." It is said that "the impelling thought in his mind from boyhood was that the religion revealed to the Hebrew race must conquer and must govern the Roman world." This idea of the triumph of Judaism "naturally developed into Christianity," and Paul by his great work "made possible that unity at which the Imperial policy was aiming." Now while it is quite conceivable that Paul cherished the hope of planting the gospel throughout the entire Roman empire, the reader of the essay before us is not convinced that he cherished this hope as a Roman citizen with the welfare of Rome at heart, or that he had any plan to perpetuate the Roman organization. The fundamental hypothesis of the chapter, interesting though it is, seems to rest on an entirely insecure foundation.

One is struck by the positive tone in some of the incidental points in this chapter, where the grounds of positive conclusions are well known to be wanting. Thus we read, "It is as certain that he (Paul) spoke the Latin language as it is that he was a Roman citizen." But we know from his own lips that he was a Roman citizen, while there is nothing in the New Testament that even definitely implies his knowledge of Latin, to say nothing of asserting it. Again, it is affirmed that Paul was never married, and even the reason why he remained unmarried is known. It was because he had chosen "the Divine life." We know of no foundation for this view and regard it as thoroughly un-Pauline.

In the seventh essay the author declares that no progress is to be made in the understanding of Acts except by completely disregarding both the critical and the traditional views alike, and also by recognizing that Paul spoke as a Roman citizen, and that accordingly "Galatia" means the Roman province of that name.

Touching Acts 19:39 the author holds in the eighth essay that the Authorised Version which has "lawful assembly" is preferable to the Revision which substitutes "regular" for "lawful." He agrees with Lévy that at this time meetings in the Greek cities like Ephesus were held only

at the instance of the Roman officials, and that extraordinary assemblies called by the officers of the city were or were becoming illegal.

One of the best essays in the volume is that on "The Olive-Tree and the Wild-Olive." The author adopts the view of Theobald Fischer, a professional botanist who has made a long study of Mediterranean fruits, that the olive tree is sometimes renewed by grafting with shoots of the wild olive. This he holds is the process to which Paul refers, who, accordingly, was not contemplating an impossible procedure, as has often been supposed by commentators, but an actual means in use among horticulturists.

The twelfth essay is a sharp critique of the "source-theory" of Acts, and the thirteenth aims to show the inadequacy of Baring Gould's view of Paul.

The eleventh essay on "St. Paul's Road from Cilicia to Iconium," beautifully illustrated with pictures by Mrs. Ramsay, shows the author at his best. Here he speaks simply as "a historian and geographer."

GEORGE H. GILBERT

NORTHAMPTON, MASS.

**Arab and Druze at Home : A Record of Travel and Intercourse with the Peoples East of the Jordan.** By WILLIAM EWING, M.A., five years resident at Tiberias. Edinburgh: T. C. & E. C. Jack, 1907. Pp. xiii + 180. 5s.

This book by the writer of the article "Hospitality," in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, is one of the most delightful of the many books descriptive of Palestine, which in increasing numbers appear every year. Its charm lies in part in the fact that it describes the region east of the Jordan which comparatively few travelers reach, partly in the delightful style of the writer, and partly in the fact that the author was for five years a missionary at Tiberias and had time to become thoroughly acquainted with the customs of the country, descriptions of which he weaves in an interesting way into his narrative of travel. The book describes a journey from Damascus through the Hauran via Zora and various points in Gebel ed-Druze, Bozra, Jerash, es-Salt, and Jericho to Jerusalem. Facts gathered on other journeys into the territory are interwoven, but the whole is grouped about the narrative of this one journey. The narrative is illustrated by excellent photographs, and altogether we are presented with an attractive book.

One drawback we are, however, bound to note. The journey described occurred in 1890, seventeen years ago. While this, perhaps makes little difference to the general reader, who desires simply the description